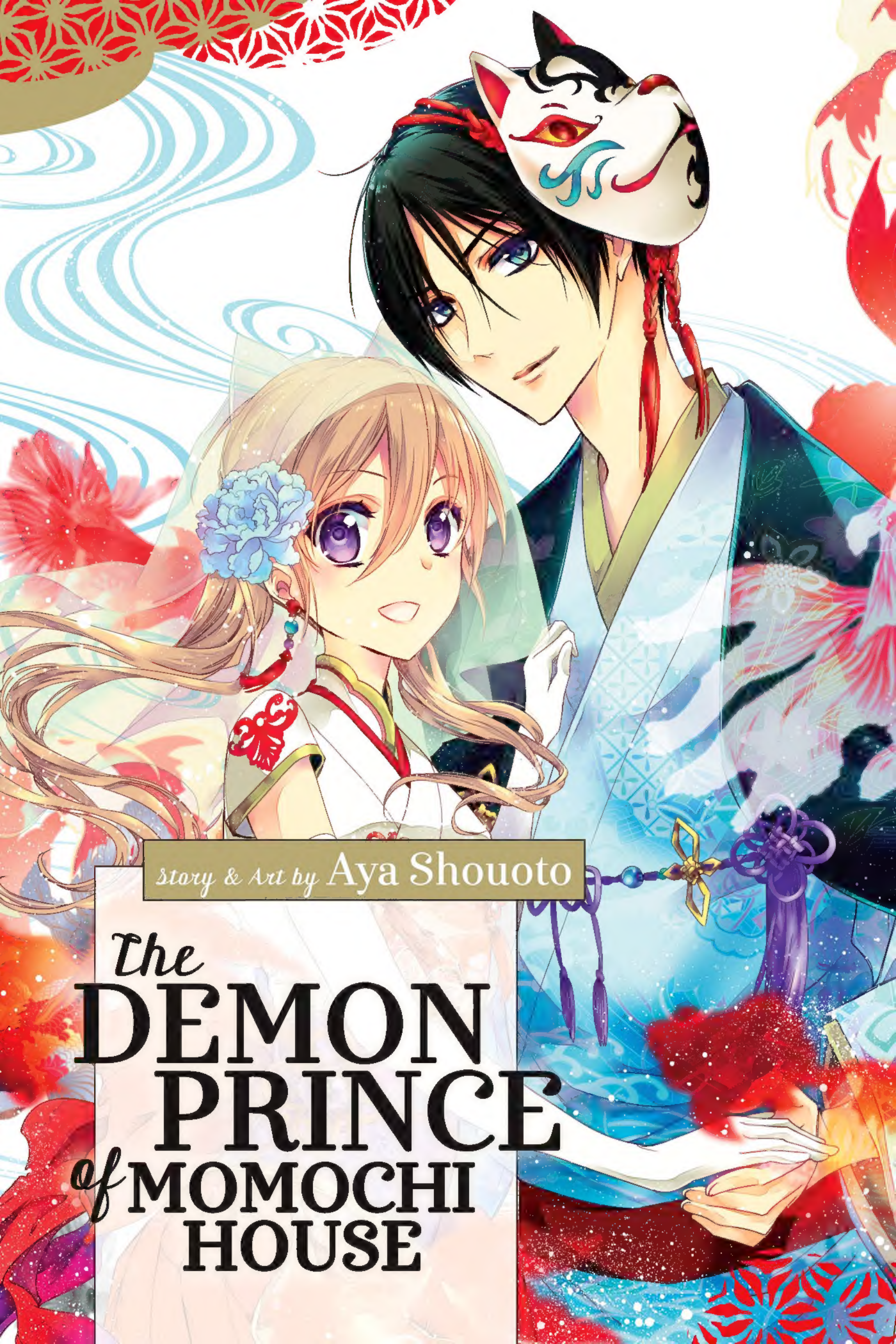
The
DEMON
PRINCE
of MOMOCHI
HOUSE
10
Story & Art by
Aya Shouoto



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The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

Love Under a Single Roof
CHAPTER 36

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10

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The Mysterious Residents of Momochi House

Aoi Nanamori

When he was 7 years old, he wandered into Momochi House and was chosen as the Omamori-sama. He transforms into a nue to perform his duties, but it seems this role was meant for Himari.

Omamori-sama (Nue)

An ayakashi, or demon, with the ears of a cat, the wings of a bird, and the tail of a fox. As the Omamori-sama, the nue protects Momochi House and eliminates demons who make their way in from the spiritual realm.

Ise

One of Omamori-sama's shikigami. He's an orangutan.

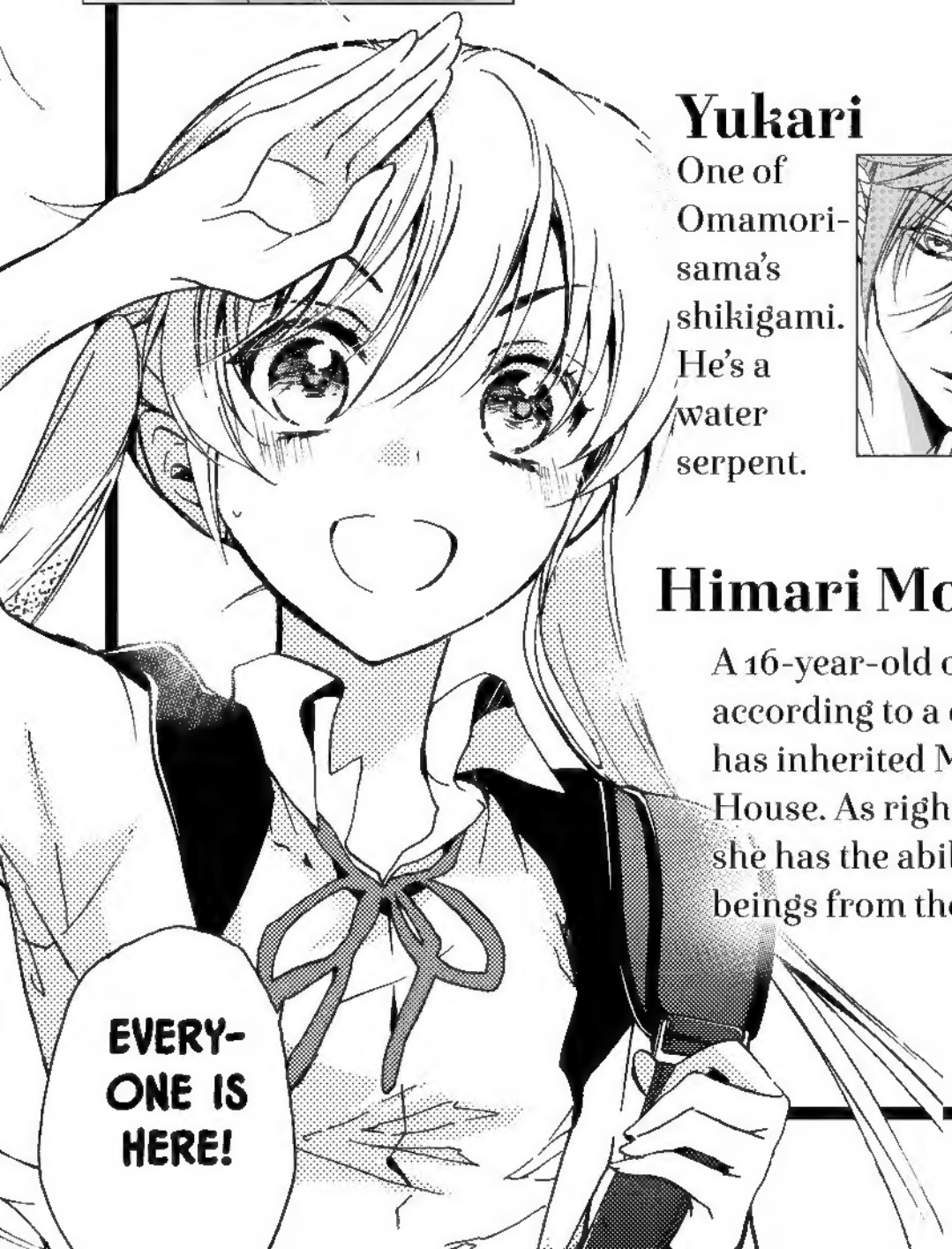
Yukari

One of Omamori-sama's shikigami. He's a water serpent.

Himari Momochi

A 16-year-old orphan who, according to a certain will, has inherited Momochi House. As rightful owner, she has the ability to expel beings from the house.

Lesser Yokai



Momochi House: Story Thus Far

Having accepted his past, Aoi is able to return to human form. While preparing for Aoi's welcome-back party, Himari searches the storeroom for items with Yukari. Yukari tells her the story of how Aoi found the diary belonging to her parents. The diary contained her mother's final loving words to her daughter. This experience rekindled the fire in Aoi's eyes that had been lost after he had been trapped in Momochi House. It gave him the drive to keep on living so that he could keep Himari safe when she arrived at Momochi House... Protecting Himari became Aoi's reason for living.
As the party's final surprise, Himari prepares some yokai fireworks. She and Aoi ride on one into the night sky. Himari shows Aoi the lights of the town he protects, and upon seeing the lights, Aoi remembers the meaning of Himari's name written in the diary: "A light of great distance." Her parents wrote, "May your light extend over great distances." Himari is amazed by the bond she has with Aoi, and he says something unexpected and kisses her...

DAZED

YM

P

HEH HEH

...

WAS THAT...A DREAM?

GOOD MORNING, HIMARI!

!

PWOP

A-AOI!

SEE. HE'S ACTING THE SAME AS ALWAYS.

LAST NIGHT...

...FELT LIKE A DREAM.

SORRY FOR SUDDENLY BARGING IN.

OH.

HM ...?

IT WASN'T A DREAM!

BREAKFAST IS READY.

I'll go on ahead.

O-OKAY.

WE'VE GOTTEN SO CLOSE RECENTLY.

TMP

TMP

TMP

I FEEL BASHFUL...

KLAK

GET IT TOGETHER, HIMARI!

GOOD MORNING!

ACT NORMAL...

YUKARI ...?

SLIDE

GOOD MORNING, HIMARI.

YOU'RE LATE.

A RICE PADDLE?

PLEASE SERVE AOI HIS FOOD.

TOMORROW I'LL TEACH YOU HOW TO FLAVOR MISO SOUP. I'M GOING TO TRAIN YOU HARD!

Ah, that has a nice ring to it.

WAIT, WHAT ARE YOU TWO SAYING?!

I GUESS THAT MAKES ME THE GROOM OF MOMOCHI HOUSE, YUKARI.

HUH ?!

BLUSH

BECAUSE YOU'RE THE BRIDE OF MOMOCHI HOUSE.

OH

SHK

SHK

MY AOI AND SOMEONE LIKE HIMARI LIVING TOGETHER UNDER ONE ROOF?

THAT'S...

ISE?!

...SO SHAMELESS! I WON'T ALLOW IT!

HAVE YOU ALWAYS BEEN THIS WAY?!

WE HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING SHAMEFUL.

...YET.

R-RIGHT!

SO DON'T ACT BASHFUL!

MASTER AOI AND HIMARI ARE FINALLY A COUPLE.

ARE THEY GETTING MAR-RIED?

WILL THEY MARRY?

SQUEE ♥

THEY'RE ALREADY LIVING TOGETHER. ♡

TWO YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING UNDER ONE ROOF... HOW EXCITING!

SQUEE ♥

CUT IT OUT!

DON'T YOU LIKE ME?

I-I'M NOT LIVING WITH AOI BECAUSE I WANT TO...

HUH?

HUH?

UH...

ARGH!!

THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT...

...LIVING TOGETHER WOULD BE REALLY AWKWARD.

SHUP

I WORRIED THAT IF OUR FEELINGS EVER BECAME MUTUAL...

WHAT I FEARED MIGHT HAPPEN IS COMING TRUE.

SHUP

SHUP

SHUP

...DO LOVE YOU...

...I...

THE TRUTH IS...

BLUSH

AAAH...

IT'S MUTUAL...

AND STARTING TODAY...

HIMARI!

BUT NO MATTER WHAT I DO, I CAN'T STOP THINKING OF HIM.

SHUP

NO! THIS ISN'T THE TIME TO BE GIDDY!

SHUP

SHUP

...IT'S SUMMER BREAK!

I HAVE NO ESCAPE!

PWOP

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

JOLT

FOL-LOWING THROUGH ON MY ORIGINAL PLAN!

WHOA!

VUMP!

BECAUSE OF EVERYTHING THAT'S HAP-PENED, I'VE BEEN PUTTING IT OFF...

...BUT NOW THAT IT'S SUMMER BREAK, I'M GOING TO RESTART MY MISSION AND EXPLORE MOMOCHI HOUSE.

TH-THAT'S A LOT OF EQUIPMENT.

I'M TAKING THIS SERI-OUSLY!

IF THINGS CONTINUE AS THEY ARE...

...IT WILL BE AWKWARD.

I SEE.

IF THINGS CON-TINUE...

UH...

B-BMP

THUP

...YOU CAN'T WEAR THIS.

...BUT...

I THINK YOU LOOK CUTE DRESSED LIKE THAT...

SMILE

I'LL ACCOMPANY YOU.

IF YOU HAVE TO RELY ON EQUIPMENT LIKE THIS, YOU SHOULDN'T GO FARTHER IN ALONE.

WHY...

...THE SUDDEN CHANGE?

I CAN'T SEE YOU IN THAT WAY.

AND HE'S NOT ACTING DIFFER-ENTLY FROM BEFORE.

HE'S ALWAYS SO KIND.

Y-YEAH...

DO YOU WANT TO GO THIS WAY?

THE TRUTH IS I...

DID HE HAVE A CHANGE OF HEART?

WAS IT A WHIM?

...BUT I'M UNABLE TO PUT THEM INTO WORDS.

THERE ARE SO MANY QUESTIONS I WANT TO ASK...

I DON'T COME IN THIS FAR VERY OFTEN.

IT GOES FARTHER BACK?

WHO KNOWS?

SHALL WE CHECK IT OUT?

THIS IS MY FIRST TIME.

YES.

DOES EVERYONE FEEL THIS WAY WHEN THEY'RE IN A LOVING RELATIONSHIP?

KLAK

AH

The shaved ice is ready!

HAVE I VEERED AWAY FROM MY GOAL OF EXPLO-RATION?

OH, HIMARI.

SINCE YOU'RE ON SUMMER BREAK...

...WHY DON'T WE GO SOMEWHERE BEAUTIFUL IN THE SPIRIT REALM...

...LIKE THE WATERING HOLE WE WENT TO BEFORE?

HUH?

YOU LIKE SUNFLOWERS, RIGHT?

I KNOW OF A PLACE WITH SUNFLOWERS AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE.

A FIELD OF SUN-FLOWERS...

HMM...

I WANT TO FIND A WAY FOR YOU TO GO OUTSIDE.

RIGHT NOW I WANT TO EXPLORE MOMOCHI HOUSE AND UNCOVER ITS SECRETS.

I...

I TOLD YOU I'M SERIOUS ABOUT THIS.

AND AFTER...

...WE CAN GO SEE MANY PLACES TOGETHER.

THEN WHY DON'T WE LOOK AROUND A LITTLE MORE THIS AFTER-NOON?

OKAY.

I can't keep doing this.

...WHENEVER I'M WITH AOI, I END UP JUST HAVING FUN...

IT SEEMS ...

KLAK

TMP TMP TMP

I'LL SEARCH THE NEARBY AREAS BY MYSELF FOR NOW.

YOU SHOULDN'T GO FARTHER IN ALONE.

I DON'T THINK SO...

DID HE TRY TO INTERFERE WITH MY EXPLOR-ING?

AH, THAT'S IT.

COME TO THINK OF IT, I'M SURE AOI WOULD HAVE ALREADY SEARCHED THE LIBRARIES AND STORE-ROOMS.

IS THERE SOME PLACE HE MIGHT HAVE OVERLOOKED?

FOR EXAMPLE ...

A ROOM THAT ONLY A WOMAN WOULD ENTER...

...A WARDROBE.

SHFF

HOW PRETTY.

WOW.

THERE ARE SO MANY...

AREN'T THEY BEAUTI-FUL?

THEY ARE, AREN'T THEY?

HIMARI HAS A SPECIAL DISPOSITION THAT AGITATES AYAKASHI...

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

I'M SORRY FOR ENTERING WITHOUT PERMISSION.

IS THIS YOUR ROOM?

WHAT A SURPRISINGLY FRIENDLY AYAKASHI!

PHEW!

FEEL FREE TO HAVE A LOOK AT MY PRIZED CLOTHING.

Ho ho ho

IT'S FINE. I WAS JUST AIRING OUT MY COLLECTION.

SHF

IS THIS YOUR ENTIRE COLLECTION?

HARDLY. THESE AREN'T ENOUGH FOR ME.

You're not going to show your face?

LATELY AN INCREASING NUMBER OF ROOMS ARE BEING SEALED, SO I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH SPACE.

I CAN'T DISPLAY ALL MY CLOTHING.

!

SWISH

A WOMAN WOULD UNDERSTAND.

AN AYAKASHI?!

MOMOCHI HOUSE IS CONTINUOUSLY EXPANDING.

THAT'S RIGHT.

...BUT HE HASN'T BEEN KEEPING UP WITH INCREASING THE NUMBER OF ROOMS IN MOMOCHI HOUSE.

THE CURRENT NUE IS QUITE CAPABLE...

THIS HOUSE IS ALIVE.

INCREASING THE NUMBER OF ROOMS?!

SHE KNOWS ABOUT THE PAST NUE AND MOMOCHI HOUSE!

IT'S AS IF... THE HOUSE ITSELF IS AN AYAKASHI...

THIS HOUSE RESIDES ON THE BORDER OF THE SPIRITUAL AND MATERIAL REALMS...

I MAY BE THE LANDLADY, BUT I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING.

YOU MENTIONED THE CURRENT NUE... DOES THAT MEAN...

...THERE WAS A NUE BEFORE AOI?

WHAT EXACTLY IS THIS HOUSE?

YOU MIGHT CALL SOMETHING LIKE THAT AN AYAKASHI.

...AS SOMETHING UNKNOWN AND STRANGE IN FORM.

BEFORE THE CURRENT NUE, THERE WASN'T ONE FOR A WHILE.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE HOUSE...

...IN THAT SITUATION?

THE HOUSE STORES BAD THINGS WITHIN ITSELF...

...AND TRIES TO PREVENT THEM FROM LEAVING...

...BUT EVENTUALLY ITS POWER TO PURIFY WEAKENS.

SO THE EVIL ENERGY AND THE AYAKASHI IT CONTAINS ARE RELEASED INTO THE HUMAN REALM?

BEFORE THAT HAPPENS...

...THE HOUSE...

...LURES IN THE NEXT OMAMORI-SAMA.

...IN?

LURES...

IT MANIPULATES HUMANS BY CONNECTING FATES AND FORMING BONDS.

SOMETIMES IT OBSCURES PATHS AND SOMETIMES IT OPENS THEM...

IT IS SAID IT WILL EVEN SEND OUT LETTERS.

I'M SURPRISED YOU BELIEVE THAT DODGY WILL IS GENUINE.

NO, THAT WILL WAS LEFT TO ME BY MY PARENTS.

Will

YOU LOOK PALE, YOUNG LADY.

OH... I'M FINE.

ARE YOU OVER-WHELMED BY MY EXQUISITE KIMONO COLLEC-TION?

I'LL GIVE YOU A GIFT. TAKE IT ON YOUR WAY OUT.

HUH? A GIFT?

BUT I...

NOW THEN.

DO

THERE IS A BIG CHEST AND A SMALL CHEST.

MP

WHICH WILL YOU CHOOSE?

I'LL TAKE THE SMALL ONE!

THIS SHOULD BE THE RIGHT ANSWER!

I...

...REMEMBER THIS FROM AN OLD FOLKTALE...

I BELIEVE IT WAS "THE TONGUE-CUT SPARROW."

IF THIS IS A TEST ABOUT BEING TOO GREEDY...

I SEE, I SEE...

SHFF

PHOO

I PREPARED THE LARGE ONE JUST FOR YOU...

SHFF

...BUT YOU REJECTED MY SHOW OF KIND-NESS.

THE ONLY THING IN THE KIMONO ...

...IS A HAND?!

GET INSIDE THE LARGE BOX!

EEK!

I'M BEING SUCKED IN!

WOOO

GRAB

!

YOU'RE ALWAYS SO RUTHLESS. YOU STEAL CLOTHES BY TAKING THE GIRL WEARING THEM...

..."HAND OF THE KIMONO."

VISH

YOU! WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE?

LET'S GIVE YOU A TASTE OF YOUR OWN MEDICINE.

SPEND SOME TIME ROTTING AWAY IN YOUR OWN BOX!

GYAHH!

YOU'RE...

...THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE!

HEY THERE...

...MOMOCHI GIRL.

FROM THE WINTER CHERRY LANTERN...

...THAT LIGHT I DEVOURED IS UPSETTING MY STOMACH.

VUP

"HEY THERE"?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?

AH, YOU SEE...

HUH?!

YOU WANTED TO DEVOUR MY NAME! I DON'T CARE IF THAT LIGHT UPSET YOUR STOMACH.

ANYWAY, IS IT ALL RIGHT FOR A GATE GUARDIAN TO LEAVE HIS GATE?

GR AH

How rude!

AH.

SMIRK

I CAME TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

SMUG

HOW CAN ANYONE GET THROUGH ?!

IT'S SO SMALL!

!!

I BROUGHT THE GATE WITH ME.

THIS IS MORE THAN ENOUGH TO PASS THROUGH.

SLRK

HUMANS ARE ALWAYS SO PICKY ABOUT SUCH MINOR THINGS.

THIS IS IMPOR-TANT!

THUP

SIGH

I CAN APPEAR AND DISAPPEAR WHENEVER AND WHERE-EVER I LIKE.

KLAK

HE DREW A HOLE?!

ALL I REQUIRE...

...IS THE POWER TO CONNECT ONE ROOM TO ANOTHER.

OH

H-HEY...

KREE

It opens!

EVEN SO, A NUMBER OF AYAKASHI HAVE BEEN INFLUENCED BY HUMANS AND CARE ABOUT LOOKS AND AUTHORITY.

SO I CARRY AROUND A GATE JUST IN CASE.

JUST WHO IS THIS AYAKASHI?!

I CAN CREATE THE CONCEPT OF A GATE.

THE CONCEPT OF A GATE...

THIS HOUSE IS BASED ON THE CONCEPT OF A GATEWAY...

...BETWEEN THE SPIRITUAL AND HUMAN REALMS.

MOMOCHI HOUSE WORKS IN A SIMILAR WAY.

I KNEW SEVERAL OF THE NUE WHO PROTECTED THIS HOUSE.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED SEVERAL THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO...

...BUT...

BEFORE THIS HOUSE APPEARED, THE HUMAN REALM WAS IN GREAT DISARRAY.

THE CHAOS THERE WAS NOT SO DIFFERENT FROM THAT IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM.

!

YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS AREA BEFORE MOMOCHI HOUSE WAS BUILT?!

SAY, WHATEVER HAPPENED...

...TO THE PREVIOUS NUE?

SO THERE WERE SEVERAL NUE BEFORE AOI...

HIS ANSWER...

...MAY GIVE ME A HINT...

...ABOUT HOW I CAN ENABLE AOI TO LEAVE THIS HOUSE.

OH?

THEN LET'S MAKE A DEAL.

HMM ...

YES.

YOU'RE CURIOUS ABOUT THAT?

WHAT IS YOUR WISH?

IF YOU GRANT ME MY WISH...

...I'LL ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS.

I CAN GIVE YOU A DIGESTIVE!

THIP

HAVING ONLY THE KANJI FOR *HI* IS MAKING MY STOMACH FEEL UNWELL.

HUH?

PLEASE GIVE ME THE REST OF YOUR NAME.

YOU WANT TO USE "HIMARI MOMOCHI" AS A STAGE NAME?

NO, THAT'S NOT IT.

I WANT THE MOMOCHI NAME.

IT HAS A LOT OF KARMA ATTACHED TO IT, AND I WANT IT.

WELL...

IT'S QUITE SIMPLE.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.

?!

LET'S GET MARRIED.

HUH?

I WON'T LET YOU GET AWAY.

WHAT NONSENSE IS THIS?

UH...

THIS GUY...

I WONDER WHAT YOU'LL TASTE LIKE...

THIS TIME I BROUGHT SAKE WITH ME.

AOI!

CLAK

THERE'S NO WAY I'D MAKE THAT DEAL!

HIMARI!

OH?

SO YOU'RE THE CURRENT OMAMORI-SAMA...

Chapter 36 End

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

CHAPTER
37

Color Tag

IT'S NOT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE! THERE'S NOTHING GOING ON BETWEEN ME AND THIS AYAKASHI.

THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE...

HOW ARE YOU ABLE TO ENTER THIS HOUSE?

AH...

OH... THAT'S RIGHT...

THE NUE SAID HE SAW EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED TO ME IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM.

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME WE'VE MET, ISN'T IT, OMAMORI-SAMA?

VUP

VISH

I'M SURE YOU KNOW BETTER THAN ANYONE.

HOW AM I ABLE TO GET IN?

WHAT ARE YOUR INTENTIONS?

WELL, I AM THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE.

I'M QUITE POWERFUL WHEN I ENCOUNTER GATELIKE ENTITIES.

MY INTEN-TIONS?

SHOOF

I CAME TO TAKE HIMARI.

YOU-

TUSSLE

MARRIAGE OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT IS OUT OF THE QUESTION!

URK!

SHOVE

DON'T TALK ABOUT ME AS IF I'M AN OBJECT!

MAR-RIAGE?!

Oh!

But I'm kind of glad that you look shocked.

IT'S SOMETHING HE DECIDED ON HIS OWN...

BLUSH

BY MARRYING HIMARI AND TAKING THE MOMOCHI NAME...

GET-

THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO DEAL WITH YOU...

...I'LL TAKE AOI NANAMORI'S PLACE...

...AS THE OMAMORI-SAMA.

HUH?

THIS HOUSE WAS ORIGINALLY PROTECTED BY THOSE WITH THE MOMOCHI NAME.

FROM THE MOMENT YOU WERE CHOSEN, THAT PRINCIPLE BEGAN TO DETERIORATE.

THIS GUY...

...WOULD BECOME THE NUE?

THIS HOUSE WILL CHOOSE A POWERFUL BEING.

TAKE AOI'S PLACE?

THAT'S ABSURD. THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN DO THAT.

ARE YOU SURE?

...ALLOW AOI TO LEAVE MOMOCHI HOUSE?

WOULD IT...

...NEVER DESIRED TO BECOME THE NUE.

YOU...

IT'S NOT A BAD DEAL.

I HAVE NO INTENTION OF GIVING UP MY POSITION AS THE OMAMORI-SAMA.

SKWEEZ

FURTHER-MORE...

TUG

...I'LL NEVER LET YOU HAVE HIMARI.

SHEE

I SEE.

TMP

WELL...

I NEVER EXPECTED...

...YOU WOULD GIVE HER UP SO EASILY.

FLW

?!

OW

THISH

FWAF

AH!

HIMARI ?!

LET'S PLAY A GAME, AOI NANAMORI.

IN ANCIENT TIMES IT WAS USED TO PUNISH EVILDOERS BY TRAPPING THEM INSIDE.

NOWADAYS IT'S A PROPER AYAKASHI THAT ENGULFS THE COLORS IT LIKES OF ITS OWN FREE WILL.

THIS AYAKASHI WANTS A COLOR.

BOM BOM

WHAT IS THIS?! I CAN'T GET OUT.

YOU'RE INSIDE AN AYAKASHI KNOWN AS THE "IRO ONI DAMA."

Iro Oni Dama means "Color Demon Sphere."

...BUT EVENTUALLY IT WILL ABSORB HER.

RIGHT NOW IT'S KEEPING HIMARI IN ITS BELLY BECAUSE IT LIKES HER COLOR...

SWF

WAIT!

IF YOU TRY TO FORCE IT OPEN, ITS CONTENTS WILL SHATTER.

IF YOU WANT TO SAVE THE GIRL...

...YOU MUST OFFER IT A COLOR IT LIKES EVEN BETTER.

THIS IS THE GAME YOU WANT TO PLAY?

THAT'S RIGHT. IN A WAY, YOU COULD CALL IT...

...COLOR TAG.

YOU MUST HAVE PLAYED IT WHEN YOU WERE A HUMAN CHILD.

THE PERSON WHO'S "IT" CHOOSES A COLOR, THEN THE OTHER CHILDREN RUN AROUND LOOKING FOR THAT COLOR TO BE SAFE.

SIMILARLY, WE WILL SEARCH FOR THE COLOR THIS AYAKASHI WANTS.

Iro Oni can also mean "color tag."

AOI!

BUT IN THIS CASE–

TELL ME THE RULES LATER.

LET'S GET STARTED.

I'LL DEFINITELY SAVE YOU.

DON'T WORRY, HIMARI.

WHILE WE'RE PLAYING, EVERYWHERE WE GO...

...IS WITHIN THIS AYAKASHI'S SPHERE OF INFLUENCE.

A COLOR ...

A COLOR ...

FWM

OOM

IF YOU TOUCH THE WRONG COLOR...

THEN LET THE GAME BEGIN!

...EVIL ENTITIES THAT HAVE BEEN TRAPPED IN THE SPHERE WILL BE RELEASED.

SHF

WILL I HAVE TO DEAL WITH THESE EVERY TIME?

SIGH

THAT'S UNFORTUNATE. YOU GOT SOME STRONG ONES.

I CLOSED THE DOOR THAT LEADS DEEPER INTO THE HOUSE.

YOUR SHIKIGAMI CAN'T COME TO YOUR AID.

AND NATURALLY YOU CAN'T BECOME OMAMORI-SAMA EITHER.

EVEN THOUGH THE NAME AOI NANAMORI IS KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE SPIRITUAL REALM...

...YOU ARE STILL BUT A HUMAN CHILD.

FOOM

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN BEAT ME?

THOSE ARE THE RULES?

...

...

SHOO

I WANT THIS TO BE A FAIR FIGHT.

ONLY A HUMAN WOULD CHEAT AT A GAME.

OF

I CAN SEE THEM BOTH THROUGH THE SURFACE OF THE SPHERE.

AOI AND THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE ARE COMPARING THEIR POWERS.

BUT AOI...

AS EXPECTED...

...THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE ISN'T ALL TALK...

...IS ABLE TO MATCH HIM WITHOUT TURNING INTO THE NUE.

WHAT DID THE GUARDIAN MEAN BY SEARCHING FOR A COLOR?

WHOOPS ...

VH

HM

...MY HAND SLIPPED.

...

IF MY FATE IS TO BE TIED TO A GATE...

...I'D LIKE TO HAVE THE MOST POWERFUL GATE I CAN GET MY HANDS ON.

TELL ME...

...WHY DO YOU WANT TO BECOME THE NUE?

IT'S SIMPLE.

I'LL SETTLE OUR MATCH...

...IN ONE GO.

GULP

ALL THIS IS BECOMING A BOTHER.

HE'S GATHERED ALL THE KIMONOS?!

WITH THIS MANY COLORS...

THOOSH

ONE SHOULD SATISFY YOU, RIGHT?

SHOFF

!

TSK!

THAT WASN'T ENOUGH?

WHAT A GREEDY AYAKASHI.

IT WOULDN'T ACCEPT ANY OF THEM!

NONE OF THESE COLORS WERE GOOD ENOUGH?

WHAT OTHER COLORS COULD THERE BE?

AOI?!

WHAT IS IT?

I UNDER-STAND NOW.

SHUNK

WHY ATTACK ME, BOY? I'M NOT CHEATING.

THAT WASN'T STRONG ENOUGH, HUH?

IT'S DIFFICULT TO KNOW HOW MUCH FORCE TO USE.

HE'S ATTACKING THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE?!

AOI...

I CAUGHT YOU.

YOUR AYAKASHI NAME IS SHUTEN DOUJI.
I FIGURED IT OUT.

I FIGURED IT OUT.

YOUR AYAKASHI NAME IS SHUTEN DOUJI.

LONG AGO IN AN ANCIENT MOUNTAIN TEMPLE LIVED A HANDSOME YOUNG BOY.

SHUTEN DOUJI...

HE BROKE THE HEARTS OF COUNTLESS WOMEN...

...AND BECAME DESPISED.

EVENTUALLY HE TURNED INTO A DEMON.

LATER HE WAS CLEANSED OF EVIL AND BECAME AN AYAKASHI...

GRIN

WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO ANYTHING?

WELL...

?!

*Iro here means "amorous" rather than "color."

!

TH

SH

SEE?

IT SEEMS IT LIKES "IRO OTOKO"...

...OR AMOROUS MEN.

*Iro here means "amorous" rather than "color."

AOI...

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

I'M SO RELIEVED...

...HIMARI.

TMP

...BECOME MORE POWERFUL?

I'M FINE, THANK YOU!

IN ANY CASE...

...I'M THE WINNER.

HAS AOI...

BUT...

I'M NOT HANDING OVER HIMARI OR THE POSITION OF NUE.

...IS BEING THE NUE A GOOD THING FOR AOI?

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

CHAPTER
38
There Are Limits to Being a Free-loader!

THAT WAS QUITE AMUSING, AOI NANAMORI.

THO

OM

BUT...

GUSH

!

LET'S MAKE IT EVEN MORE AMUSING.

FWOOM

TWP

FWOOM

HEY, GUARDIAN OF THE GATE! YOU LOST, SO LET US LEAVE!

BUT BEFORE YOU DO, TELL ME ABOUT THE FORMER NUE–

OH.

GWAR

ALL I REQUIRE IS THE POWER TO CONNECT ONE ROOM TO ANOTHER.

THE AYAKASHI THAT WERE ABSORBED BY THE SPHERE HAVE NOW JOINED HIM...

NO WAY...

THUD

STAND BACK.

AOI?

THAT'S WHAT I LIKE TO SEE.

VRM

VHHM

YOU SAY THAT, BUT YOU'RE QUITE NASTY YOURSELF.

YOUR POWER TO CREATE GATES IS QUITE TROUBLE-SOME...

THEY BOTH SEEM TO BE ENJOYING THEMSELVES.

MGGH

H-HOLD ON... IF YOU BOTH RAMPAGE THROUGH THE HOUSE LIKE THIS...!

THUK THUK THUK THUK THUK THUK

LOOM

WAIT FOR ME, MY PRIZE.

KISS

KISS

VHM

HEY, WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE–

I THOUGHT I HEARD SOME-THING SNAP?

YOU'RE BEING A PEST.

THE GUARDIAN...

...KNOWS ABOUT THE NUE BEFORE AOI...

GLUG

NOT BAD.

OH?

SO THIS IS AOI NANAMORI'S NUE...

ONE ATTACK, HUH?

SLASH

INTOXICATE ME MORE!

AND THERE ARE MANY THINGS I WANT TO ASK HIM...

PLEASE DON'T SEAL HIM AWAY!

THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE SAVED ME!

YOU'RE DEFENDING HIM AFTER WHAT HE DID?

NUE!

THAT MAKES ME WANT TO ELIMINATE HIM.

NUE?!

THE NUE'S POWER...

...IS OVER-WHELMING.

BUT...

The house may break!

...THE GUARDIAN IS USING HIS POWERS TO ESCAPE EVERY TIME.

THERE'S NO END TO THIS.

WHAT WILL HE DO?

YOU'RE...

FWOOM

...TRYING TO BAIT ME, AREN'T YOU?

YOU THINK SO?

!
IS HE-
I'M RELUCTANT TO DO THIS.
...BUT IT'S THE ONLY WAY I CAN RESTRAIN THIS FELLOW.
A BLOOD SPHERE...

!

IS HE–

I'M RELUCTANT TO DO THIS...

...BUT IT'S THE ONLY WAY I CAN RESTRAIN THIS FELLOW.

A BLOOD SPHERE...

?!

BECOME MY SHIKIGAMI AND OBEY ME.

...SO I CANNOT TURN DOWN A CONTRACT.

...I LOST TO YOU...

BECAUSE OF THE GAME WE PLAYED...

I'LL BECOME YOUR SHIKIGAMI.

FINE.

VERY WELL...
YOUR NAME...
I'M HAKKA.
HAKKA, THE SHUTEN DOUJI...
...THE MAN WITH THE BLOOD OF AN ANCIENT SNAKE GOD...
KOFF
A SHIKIGAMI CONTRACT?!
I COULD RIP OUT YOUR TONGUE...
...AND WORK YOU UNTIL YOU DIE.
KLUP
KOFF

KLUP

KOFF

I COULD RIP OUT YOUR TONGUE...

...AND WORK YOU UNTIL YOU DIE.

VERY WELL...

YOUR NAME...

HAKKA, THE SHUTEN DOUJI...

I'M HAKKA.

...THE MAN WITH THE BLOOD OF AN ANCIENT SNAKE GOD...

KOFF

A SHIKIGAMI CONTRACT?!

...ACCEPT MY SHACKLES.

THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE IS NOW THE NUE'S SHIKIGAMI...

EVEN SO...

Hmm. I'm not into this sort of thing.

I WON'T GIVE UP.

HUH?

WAS THIS...

...WHAT HE WANTED TO HAPPEN?

A TROUBLE-SOME PERSON HAS BECOME THE NUE'S SHIKIGAMI!

NOW I CAN TARGET YOUR NUE POWERS UP CLOSE.

SO... CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT THE PREVIOUS NUE?

HM?

THAT WAS A DEAL BETWEEN US, WASN'T IT?

UH...

IN THAT CASE...

UH?!

AOI?!

DO NOT GET TOO CLOSE TO HER.

KOFF KOFF

ALSO...

THAT'S WHY I MADE YOU MY SHIKIGAMI.

YOU'RE USING COMMANDS ON ME ALREADY?

PSST

...ANYTHING UNNEEDED.

DON'T SAY...

VISH

KRA SH

GYAAH!

FOR NOW, HOW ABOUT GOING **INTO THE CEILING...?**

AH. YOU'RE-

OH, IT'S NOTHING.

WHAT ARE YOU TWO WHISPERING ABOUT?

HM?

Did they become friends?

I WANTED TO ASK YOU...

AOI...

DOES AOI HATE HIM?!

WOW... THIS FEELS GREAT.

*I'll get you back for this!

AFTER YOU CHANGED BACK FROM BEING THE NUE...

UM...

WHY AREN'T I NAKED?

...

HUH?

UH... YEAH.

SHFF

AH... I GUESS SO.

IT SEEMS AS IF...

...IS BECOMING LESS DISTINCT...

...THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE NUE AND AOI...

IT'S BETTER THIS WAY, RIGHT?

I NEVER THOUGHT IT WAS POSSIBLE.

I WAS REALLY SURPRISED BY WHAT THE GUARDIAN SAID.

W-WOW...

IS THIS...

...REALLY ALL RIGHT?

AOI COULD HAVE BEEN FREE.

TAKING ON THE MOMOCHI NAME THROUGH MARRIAGE PASSES ON THE POSITION OF NUE...

HIMARI...

IF WE WERE MARRIED...

SUFF

...YOU'D NO LONGER SEE OTHER MEN IN THAT WAY, RIGHT?

KISS

DISIN-
FECTANT.

B-BMP

AH...

HEY!

B-BMP

PWop

YOU REALIZE I'M RIGHT HERE, DON'T YOU?

ACK!

DON'T SPY ON US!

SLAM

AOI NANAMORI! DON'T TEASE ME!

PERHAPS I SHOULD SEND YOU ONE LEVEL HIGHER.

B-BUMP

B-BUMP

HE-WAS CLINGY BEFORE...

Ah. That surprised me.

...FELT DIFFER-ENT...

RIGHT NOW...

...BUT THAT...

...I AM THE OMAMORI-SAMA OF MOMOCHI HOUSE.

I WON'T LET ANYONE TAKE MY PLACE.

EVEN IF...

...YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE ELSE.

ZURG

WHY...?

ZURG

NOW THEN...

HOW LONG WILL THIS CURRENT NUE HOLD UP?

UN-NECES-SARY

ZURG

UN-
NECES-
SARY
...

UN-
NECES-
SARY...

UN-
NECES-
SARY
...

UN-
NECES-
SARY
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SARY...

UN-
NECES-
SARY...

UN-
NECES-
SARY...

WHY
WOULD
AOI SAY
THAT?

LOOK WHAT HAPPENED. IT SEEMS...

ZURG
ZURG
UN-NECES-SARY...

EE
EE
NUE...

UN-
NECES-
SARY...

...IT'S
COMING.

...UN-
NECES-
SARY...

A NUE
IMPOS-
TOR
IS...

Chapter 38/End

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

BONUS STORY

PLEASE TURN HIM OVER TO US.

SHFF

IF YOU DON'T HAND HIM OVER...

WE HEARD HE HAS ESCAPED TO THIS HOUSE ON THE BORDER, SO WE FOLLOWED HIM HERE.

WE ARE THE ORANGUTAN TRIBE'S CRIME SQUAD.

A MEMBER OF OUR TRIBE HAS BROKEN OUR LAWS.

A CRIMINAL? HOW TERRIBLE.

VERY WELL.

I KNOW OF THE HONORABLE ORANGUTAN TRIBE.

PLEASE FEEL FREE...

...TO SEARCH FOR THIS CRIMINAL IN THE HOUSE.

AS HIS FIRST SHIKIGAMI, I SHALL ACT IN HIS PLACE.

MY MASTER IS VERY BUSY AT THE MOMENT.

SK

FF

IN THAT CASE-

KLAK

...AREN'T QUITE SURE WHERE EVERYTHING IS.

...THIS MANSION IS VERY LARGE. EVEN MY MASTER AND I...

BUT I MUST WARN YOU...

BONUS STORY

To Capture an Orang-utan: A Comedic Tale

THIS IS MOMOCHI HOUSE.

IT LIES ON THE BORDER OF THE SPIRITUAL AND HUMAN REALMS.

WILL YOU FIND A DEMON OR A SNAKE?

WE OF THE ORANGUTAN TRIBE ARE AMONGST THE MOST RESPECTED OF ALL AYAKASHI...

YOU MAY BE OUR YOUNGEST, BUT WE CAN'T FORGIVE ANYONE WHO BREAKS OUR LAWS AND GOES ON A RAMPAGE.

YOU HAVE BROUGHT SHAME TO OUR TRIBE.

THEREFORE, YOU HAVE BEEN FITTED WITH A CURSED COLLAR.

IF YOU BREAK OUR LAWS...

IF YOU RETURN TO THE HUMAN REALM AND RELEASE YOUR POWERS...

...THE CURSE WILL DESTROY YOUR BODY.

HOW LONG HAVE I REMAINED LIKE THIS?

AHH...

RWL

R-WL

BE-CAUSE OF THAT...

IT'S TRUE AYAKASHI DON'T HAVE SCHOOL OR WORK LIKE HUMANS...

...IT'S VERY...

BORING!

THAT'S WHAT I THINK.

SPOO SH

A SPRING THAT SHOWS ME THE HUMAN REALM. THIS IS MY SECRET HIDEOUT.

IF I MAKE RIPPLES IN THE WATER, IT SHOWS ME HUMANS DOING ALL KINDS OF SILLY THINGS.

I PASS THE TIME BY WATCHING THEM.

GYAA AAH!

YAWN

WATCHING THEM IS BORING.

AYAKASHI HAVE BOTHER-SOME RULES.

I USED TO GO DOWN TO THE HUMAN REALM TO BOTHER THEM ONCE IN A WHILE, BUT I GOT CAUGHT...

...AND NOW I HAVE TO STAY HERE.

HM?

THAT WAS THE MOST PATHETIC SCREAM I EVER HEARD. THIS WAS HOW I FIRST MET HIM.

HE WAS BEING CHASED BY A LARGE AYAKASHI, SO I SAVED HIM.

TROMP

TROMP

HE TOOK A LIKING TO ME.

TRMBL

TRMBL

YOU'RE THE REBELLIOUS ONE—THE YOUNGEST!

...ONE OF THE ORANGUTAN TRIBE THAT I SO ADMIRE!

YOU MUST BE...

WHAT'S THIS? YOU'RE LOOKING INTO THE HUMAN REALM?

A TRUE REBEL!

Y-YOU THINK SO?

WOW! THAT COLLAR... THE SYMBOL OF A REBEL!

MASTER ISE!

I AM A NAMELESS LESSER YOKAI...

BUT...

PERHAPS ONE DAY, I'LL WAKE UP AS AN ORANGUTAN.

Y-YEAH...

HMM?

...DON'T YOU THINK MY AMAZING FLUFF SLIGHTLY RESEMBLES THAT OF ONE OF YOUR TRIBE?

IT'S A REAL BOTHER.

Stop relying on me!

IF I DO ANYTHING TO THAT AYAKASHI, IT'LL PLACE A COUNTER CURSE ON ME.

MASTER ISE, PLEASE DEFEAT HIM WITH YOUR POWER!

TROMP

AFTER THAT, HE'D ALWAYS RUN TO ME WHENEVER AN EVIL AYAKASHI WOULD NOTICE HIM AND CHASE HIM DOWN.

HMM...

WHAT AN EXPERT! WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?

I'VE ALREADY GOTTEN BORED OF IT.

YOU THINK SO?

MASTER ISE, THIS HUMAN SPRING IS REALLY AMUSING, ISN'T IT?

THEN...

JUST WATCHING IS PRETTY BORING.

HE WAS ALWAYS STARING INTO THE SPRING.

HE NEVER GOT BORED OF IT.

I WONDER HOW MUCH TIME WE PASSED LIKE THAT...

!

EVEN THOUGH HE'S AN AYAKASHI, HAS HE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH A HUMAN?!

...

IS HE...?!

A HUMAN... GIRL?!

HE'S THE REBEL! A TRUE REBEL!

THEN ONE DAY...

MASTER ISE...

THERE'S GOING TO BE A CEL-EBRATION.

HUH?!

!

YOU SHOULD GIVE UP ON THAT GIRL.

HE REALLY IS A REBEL!

...HOW DO I GET TO THE HUMAN REALM?

TODAY...

...SHE'S DRESSED IN WHITE AND EVERYONE HAS GATHERED TO SEE HER.

IN THE RARE MOMENTS SHE DOES, IT'S ADORABLE. HER LAUGH IS LIKE THE SOUND OF CHIMING BELLS.

SHE'S ALL ALONE AND DOESN'T LAUGH VERY MUCH.

I WANT TO HEAR HER LAUGH IN PERSON.

JUST THIS ONCE.

I WANT TO JOIN THE CELEBRATION.

...

ARE YOU SURE YOU ONLY WANT TO ATTEND THE CEREMONY?

...

DO YOU KNOW THIS IS-

WHITE CLOTHES...

A CELEBRA-TION...

I...

I WANT TO BE HER FRIEND.

A FRIEND...

Y-YEAH...

REBELS TEND TO HAVE LOTS OF FRIENDS!

YOU'RE A REBEL WHO KNOWS ALL ABOUT THE HUMAN REALM. YOU MUST HAVE MANY FRIENDS.

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

PSST

LISTEN CLOSELY. THE WAY FOR AN AYAKASHI AND A HUMAN TO BECOME FRIENDS...

...WAS WRITTEN ON A FORBIDDEN SCROLL I SAW IN THE SPRING...

A FOR-BIDDEN SCROLL ?!

WHAT A REBEL!

THE TWO OF US CAME TO THE HOUSE THAT SAT ON THE BORDER OF THE SPIRITUAL AND HUMAN REALMS.

I'LL PRETEND TO BE A SCARY AYAKASHI AND ATTACK THE HUMANS...

...THEN YOU CAN SAVE THEM FROM ME.

THAT'LL PROVE TO THEM THAT YOU'RE A GOOD AYAKASHI. THEY'LL BE SO GRATEFUL THAT THEY'LL ALLOW YOU TO JOIN THEIR CELEBRATION.

WHAT'S THIS?

SNEAK

IT'S PRETTY QUIET.

I HEARD THE HOUSE GUARDIAN HAD RETURNED, AND IT WAS NO LONGER POSSIBLE TO PASS THROUGH...

WE HEADED STRAIGHT TO THE VILLAGE WHERE THAT GIRL LIVED.

AAH! YOU HAVE DEFEATED ME!

GRWWL!

LET'S DO THIS.

Take this!

HOCUS POCUS! MMBL MMBL

THAT WAS EASY

HE USED A HUMAN FORM TO MEET THEM.

POOF

FOR ONLY ONE TIME IN MY ENTIRE LIFE...

WOW! YOU CAN DO THAT?

TMP

TMP

SWF

DID HE BEFRIEND THE HUMANS?

TRMBL
TRMBL
HUFF
HUFF
?!
WHAT ARE YOU HOLDING?
WHAT HAP-PENED?!
DID THE HUMANS TORMENT YOU?!
MASTER ISE!
HUFF
HUFF
WFF
WHEN I JOINED THE CELEBRA-TION...
...NO LONGER MOVED.
...THAT GIRL...

...SO I...

THIS WAS FLOATING ABOVE HER CHEST. IT SEEMED LIKE IT WAS LAUGHING...

A CEL-EBRA-TION?

NO, IT WAS...

THAT'S...

MASTER ISE... WHAT SHOULD I DO?

...TOOK IT WITH ME!

BUT THAT HUMAN IS ALREADY...

I WANT TO HEAR HER LAUGH ONCE MORE.

SWF

...SHE CAN'T BE REBORN.

IF YOU DON'T PLACE HER SOUL BACK IN HER BODY WITHIN SEVEN DAYS...

YOU'RE...

RETURN IT.

?!

IT SEEMS SOME BAD THINGS HAVE PASSED THROUGH WHILE MY MASTER WAS TAKING A NAP.

SWF

A HUMAN SOUL...

PURSU-ERS?

...A MOMOCHI HOUSE SHIKIGAMI!

I DIS-COVERED SOME-THING TASTY...

I'VE BEEN FOL-LOWING YOU.

IF YOU BREAK OUR LAWS...

IF YOU RETURN TO THE HUMAN REALM...

JOLT

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

DA

SH

?!

HEY, WAIT!

AH!

DOESN'T THAT BEAST EVER RELENT?!

...AND RELEASE YOUR POWERS...

...THE CURSE WILL DE-STROY YOUR BODY.

ARE YOU AWAKE?

I CAN'T MOVE...

THE CURSE HAS SPREAD THROUGHOUT YOUR BODY.

AYAKASHI JUST DIS-APPEAR.

HA!

DIE?

NOTHING IS LEFT BEHIND.

DON'T TALK AS IF I'M HUMAN.

SORRY, IT'S BECAUSE I'M HUMAN.

...YOU WILL DIE.

ISE SAID IF NOTHING IS DONE...

THIS IS MOMOCHI HOUSE.

I CAN SAVE YOU.

WHERE AM I?

WHAT IS A HUMAN KID DOING HERE?

IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER ANY-MORE.

I CAN SAVE YOU...

...IF YOU BECOME THE OMAMORI-SAMA'S SHIKIGAMI.

YOU? A HUMAN? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

ARE YOU GOING TO LET ME DEVOUR YOUR SOUL?

A SHIKI-GAMI...

THIS IS RIDICU-LOUS.

FORM A CONTRACT AND SERVE YOUR MASTER...

...WANT TO SAVE ME?

WHY WOULD THE OMAMORI-SAMA...

USE YOUR POWERS AS HE COMMANDS...

YOU SAVED YOUR FRIEND.

WHY WOULD THIS KID HELP ME?

I LET YOU PASS THROUGH BECAUSE I WAS TOO WEAK.

AND...

MY FRIEND, HUH?

MY FRIEND...

MASTER ...

TEP

HE'S NO LONGER...

BUT...

...

THAT VOICE...

MASTER ISE!

MASTER ISE.

VHHM

A DOG?

SO...

TEP

...BUT I FOLLOWED YOUR SMELL AND FINALLY MADE IT BACK HERE.

IT USED UP ALL MY POWERS...

...I WANTED TO ASK THE OMAMORI-SAMA TO HELP.

...BUT I WASN'T ALLOWED IN THE HOUSE IN THIS FORM.

WELL... I TRIED TO RETURN THAT GIRL'S SOUL...

WHAT...ARE YOU DOING HERE?

THIS BOY IS...

PLEASE DELIVER HER SOUL...

IN MY NAME, I SHALL RETURN YOU...

...THE OMAMORI-SAMA.

OKAY.

...TO THE PLACE WHERE HUMAN SOULS GO...

THANK GOODNESS. I'M GLAD HER SOUL DIDN'T DISAPPEAR BECAUSE OF ME.

THANK YOU...

THANK YOU...

I WASN'T ABLE TO BECOME FRIENDS WITH HER...

PHEW...

TEP

TEP

NOW SHE'LL BE ABLE TO LAUGH ONCE MORE.

TEP

...BUT I ALREADY HAD YOU, MASTER ISE.

WE'RE BOTH REBELS...

...AREN'T WE?

PLEASE, OMAMORI-SAMA...

...LOOK AFTER MY FRIEND.

KYAAAH!
HEH
I WONDER WHAT YOU'LL FIND NEXT.
KLAK
WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THIS HOUSE?!
YOU FOUND SOME DEMONS AND SNAKES, DIDN'T YOU?

MY, MY...
WELCOME TO MOMOCHI HOUSE.

MY,
MY...

WELCOME
TO
MOMOCHI
HOUSE.

THAT'S-!

BESIDE ME IS MY SECOND SHIKIGAMI...

...ISE.

YOU...

YOU TRICKED US!

THE CRIMINAL YOU WERE SEARCHING FOR NO LONGER EXISTS.

PLEASE SHOW YOURSELVES OUT.

I SAID YOU COULD SEARCH FOR HIM.

GRIN

I NEVER SAID WE WOULD HAND HIM OVER.

I'm glad we didn't have to use those things.

I had a lot prepared for you.

I THOUGHT YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN UNRULIER.

THAT WENT SPLENDIDLY.

NEVER MIND THAT.

SKRTCH

SKRTCH

MY HAIR IS SHORT NOW!

AN ORANGUTAN'S HAIR IS THE SOURCE OF HIS POWER!

WHAT'S WITH THIS?!

I'M SURPRISED YOU AGREED TO THE CONTRACT IN SUCH A SHORT TIME.

POIT

YOU HAVE A LITTLE BONUS HERE.

A BONUS?!

HARDLY!

IT COULDN'T BE HELPED.

BECAUSE OF THE CURSE, YOU HAD EXHAUSTED YOUR ENERGY AND WERE ON THE VERGE OF DEATH.

AN AYAKASHI'S BODY IS MADE UP OF AYAKASHI ENERGY.

BY MAKING A CONTRACT TO BECOME THE OMAMORI-SAMA'S SHIKIGAMI, YOU WERE GRANTED ENERGY...

...AND THE CURSE WAS DISSOLVED.

GOOD THINKING, AOI.

I'M GLAD IT WENT WELL.

I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU FROM HERE ON, ISE.

WHO KNOWS?

I SUPPOSE UNTIL I DIE?

"FROM HERE ON"? JUST HOW LONG IS THIS CONTRACT?

THIS PUNY KID IS MY MASTER?!

HOW LONG WILL I BE DOING THIS?

HOW LONG CAN I DO THIS?

I SEE...

THAT'S NOT A VERY LONG TIME.

HUMANS DIE PRETTY QUICKLY.

YEAH.

SKWEEZ

HOW WILL SHE LAUGH? I'M A LITTLE CURIOUS.

...THAT WILL BE REBORN ONCE MORE...

THAT HUMAN SOUL...

WELL... I'LL JOIN YOU FOR A BIT THEN.

WHAT KIND OF VOICE HAD HE BEEN DRAWN TO?

I KIND OF...

...WANT TO KNOW.

HEY...

OH. A NAME...

I SHOULD HAVE GIVEN HIM ONE.

I WILL CONTINUE TO REMEMBER HIM...

...FONDLY.

MY FRIEND.

Bonus Story/End

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

This is volume 10 of *The Demon Prince of Momochi House*. Thankfully this series will continue beyond this volume. This time I had the opportunity to write a bonus story about Ise's past. It's a slightly long story. How was it? There's still more I want to write about. I hope I'll have your continued support.

And we finally have our first cover with Blue and Aoi. When *Momochi House* was about to be published in Asuka magazine, I was asked to draw the preview illustration. My editor told me to "draw them together even though they're the same person." It was a big revelation to me. Since then they've been my favorite subjects to draw. "Two sides of the same coin" is what I have in mind.

By the way, about the name Aoi. I was reading a book about Kyoto's Aoi Festival. *Aoi* ("hollyhock") is a play on words for *au hi* ("meeting day"). In other words, it's a day to meet the gods. That's where I got the inspiration. I'd like to go to the festival someday.

Aya Shouoto

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2016 ××

Aya Shouoto

Let's celebrate volume 10!
I couldn't have spun the tale of Momochi House without your encouragement. Thank you very much. The word *momochi* means "multitude." It evokes the image of things spread out as far as the eye can see. That's what I had in mind when I came up with this title. I hope this story can expand in the manner its name suggests.

-Aya Shouoto

Aya Shouoto was born on December 25. Her hobbies are traveling, staying at hotels, sewing and daydreaming. She currently lives in Tokyo and enjoys listening to J-pop anime theme songs while she works.

The Demon Prince of Momochi House

Volume 10
Shojo Beat Edition

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